

THE PRINCE OF LIFE

NO. 2139

A SERMON
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, APRIL 20, 1890
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON
ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, APRIL 6, 1890

"And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses."
Acts 3:15

PETER does not conceal the death of Christ, he is not ashamed of the fact that his Lord was crucified. God forbid that any of us should be ashamed of the cross, may we speak of it without a blush! Peter does not flatter his hearers, but he declares that they "killed the Prince of life." This was literally true, and it was needful that they should know and feel it. There is no Gospel without the cross, and no useful preaching which does not appeal to the conscience, yes, there must be the cross for doctrine, and honest rebuke as the trumpet to awaken men's hearts. You ministers take note of this!

Mark well that, in the same sentence in which he testified to the Lord's death, Peter bears witness to His resurrection. The verse is very short, and yet contains the two greatest events of human history, "Ye killed the Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead." The crucifixion and the resurrection come close together.

There are no intervening words in Peter's speech, as there was scarcely an interval as a matter of fact. On the Friday evening our Redeemer is laid in the grave, and He quits it on the Sunday morning early. It is called "three days" by Oriental custom, but as a matter of fact, the interval only consisted of parts of two days, and one whole day. God has a way of handling time which makes a day as a thousand years, and a thousand years as a day, and in this case He compressed into the smallest space the three days during which the Great Hostage remained in durance vile in the grave.

Beloved, I wish you would learn a lesson here, never draw out sorrow and dread beyond the shortest necessary period. You that have been made to feel your death, and are at this time, as it were, wrapped in your grave clothes, I pray that you may know no long interval between the time when you are slain by the law and made alive again by grace! Why should we tarry longer than may be under the bondage of the law? Dark is that night in which Jesus has not yet come, and yet the storm is raging.

When the soul has only life enough to mourn its death, it is a painful condition. Let that period be made as short as possible. Is it not written, "After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight"? Why should we make months and years of that which need be scarcely three days? If God contracts three days into one, may we not by holy faith make short work of our time of conviction and fear? When we know our death, we have in measure begun to live, and we should be eager that our life should quit the sepulcher of doubt and enjoy the light of joy.

I am about to speak of our Lord for that very purpose. I hope that the music of His charming name may bring rejoicing to sad hearts. Here is your power to quit your spiritual death, here is your sole hope of spiritual life, Jesus who rose from the dead is "the Prince of life." We will begin with that. *Consider a title*—"Prince of life." When we have done with that, we will look further into our text, and *unfold a roll of wonder*—"Ye killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses." There are many riddles in that paradoxical statement—"Ye killed the Prince of life." When we have done with these points, we will come to a speedy close, as *we suggest an inquiry* which may be practically profitable to you.

I. First, then, let us CONSIDER A TITLE—"The Prince of life."

This is not a literal translation, though it is a valuable interpretation. The word here is that which is translated “author” in that place wherein our Lord is said to be “the author and finisher of our faith” (Heb 12:2), and yet again it is rendered “captain” (Heb 2:10), where He is called “the captain of our salvation,” made perfect through suffering. The word “Prince” is not inaccurate, for the idea of principedom lies on the surface of the Greek word, and therefore I shall keep to our own thrice precious version, which, take it for all in all, remains the Queen of all the versions. Still, you will not forget that it does include the sense of “*author of life*.”

Here it may be well to say that we think that Christ is indeed the Creator of all things, and especially of life, “All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life.” Our Lord Jesus is peculiarly the Creator in connection with life, and I take pleasure in thinking of all life as proceeding from Him by whom all things consist. But this is assuredly true of all spiritual life, which is a higher and a nobler thing than life vegetable, animal, or mental. From Him, the Sun of Righteousness, every vital spark of heavenly flame has been sent forth, He is the quickening Spirit, and by union with Him we live unto God, if, indeed, we so live. There is no spiritual life of which He is not the author, and there never will be.

When you and I come to deal with men for their salvation, we discover our inability, for we perceive that the creation of life is out of our power, since it remains the sole prerogative of the Son of God. To Him is given power over all flesh, that He may give eternal life to as many as the Father has given Him. “As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will.” All our preaching is in vain unless Jesus sends forth life. “He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1Jo 5:12), and what can we do among the dead? Come, thou Lord and Giver of life, for without You we are but as the dead burying the dead.

But now we will handle our text as it stands in our version. It is a beautiful name this—“the Prince of life.” Though seldom preached upon, it is one of our Lord’s famous titles. He will be gloriously known by this name in the day of His appearing, when He shall raise the dead, but it is a title which belonged to Him before He was nailed to the tree, for they “killed the Prince of life.” The title belonged to Him even when He was dead, for when killed He was still, “the Prince of life.” The title is His to the full now that He is risen, and ever lives to make intercession for us. None can share it with Him, much less can any take it away from Him. He alone is “the Prince of life.”

Upon this famous title we would remark that it is justified by the fact that *He possesses life supremely*. In Him is life emphatically, to its deepest and highest degree. In Him is life superlatively, and beyond all others. Of Him John well said, “The life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.” He bears the name of “The Life” in that famous passage, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” He says of Himself, “I am he that liveth.”

As surely as we have a living God we have a living Savior. He is life self-existent, sustained by nothing from without. He is life essential, life eternal. He is the Prince of life, because in Him life dwells in all its fullness, force, and independence. “As the Father has life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself” (Joh 5:26). Jesus lives, He must live, He cannot cease to live. All things else may pass away, and like the bubbles on the wave dissolve into their native nothingness, but the Christ of God must live, and live in full energy, and hence He is “the Prince of life.”

Life is His natural patrimony. Life is His royal heritage. We hear of ladies who are peeresses in their own right, so is Christ the Prince of life in His own right, not only by purchase, or attainment, or reward, but by His nature and relationship to the Highest, for He is in Himself God that lives forever. Moreover, He has power over His own life, in a way in which none of us can imitate Him, as the God-man His life is absolutely at His own disposal.

In the realm of life He is Prince, but we are only subjects. He says of His own life, “I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” This is not our case. We pay the debt of nature, and die, but our Lord owed no debt to nature, seeing He is the Maker of all. He died voluntarily, and of His own

accord, you and I may not do this except under the compulsion of obedience to God. He resumed possession of life at His own will, which you and I could not do. He had the right, the authority, the power thus to deal with His own life. If this had not been so, He could not have offered Himself to die in our place and stead, but having a power and principdom over His own life, such as we have not, He could lay down His life for us, and He could take it again.

O man! you have not life in your own right, it is lent to you by Him who is still owner of it. You can not lay down your life at will, for it is not yours, but God's. Live your appointed time, else will you commit a crime against the majesty of the Life-giver! Our Lord Jesus assumed the life of men, and when He chose He could lay it down, for He was still the ever-living God. When He chose, He could raise His human body from among the dead, and walk again among the sons of men, this He has done, and many witnesses have attested the fact. Let us rejoice that we worship the living God through a living Mediator!

How glad are we that we are comforted by the same assurance which sustained the heart of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth"! In an hour of great depression of spirit Luther was seen to write on the table before him these two words—*Vivit! Vivit!* and when he had so written, he arose, and went about his business calmly and quietly, as well he might, since his Almighty Helper lived. "The Lord is risen indeed." Is not this enough to make us all Luthers if we could but drink it in? If JEHOVAH Jesus lives, His cause can never die, and our acceptance before God can never fail. The great Redeemer lives emphatically and eternally, and therefore let our faith in Him rise to full assurance, and let that full assurance lift us to the summit of delight.

*"He lives, He lives, and sits above,
For ever interceding there;
Who shall divide us from His love?
Or what shall tempt us to despair?"*

In the next place, consider that our Lord is "the Prince of life" because *He won it for us right gloriously*. We had forfeited life, and had come under the sentence, "Thou shalt surely die." We fell under bondage to the power of death, and became dead to God, righteousness, and hope. Our Lord Jesus entered into the lists against our great adversary, who had the power of death, that is, the devil. He had skirmishes with him in the wilderness, and He struggled with him in the garden, even to a bloody sweat. Our enemy was strong through our sin and the curse of the law which follows it, but our Lord was strong in love to bear our sin in His own body, and to endure the chastisement of our peace upon the cross.

He fought the foes of our souls, and returned with dyed garments from Edom, having trampled under His lone foot all the powers of darkness, as the grapes are trodden in the winepress. He Himself bowed His head to death, and by death He overcame the prince of darkness. By His patient suffering and painful death He won for us the right to live forever. His endurance of the death penalty blotted out the writ of judgment which had been issued against us, He Himself putting it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.

*"Bruised is the serpent's head,
Hell is vanquish'd, death is dead,
And to Christ gone up on high,
Captive is captivity."*

By dying, the just for the unjust, our Lord, who was both Victim and Victor, became our "Prince of life," handing us the pardon and justification, by which our eternal life is secured. As by the first Adam came death, so by the second Adam life has been bestowed. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," for the condemnation has been placed upon Him, and by this grand transference, while death has passed upon Him, life has come to us. Our life is the glorious spoil which "the Prince of life" has snatched from the Destroyer, and granted freely to us. Well may we crown Him

Prince of life “who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel”!

Thirdly, our Lord may well be called “the Prince of life” because *He gives it so plentifully*. With both hands He scatters it where all had been death. As He has life most abundantly, and has won for us the right to it, so He actually imparts it to His chosen by the Spirit of life. Where the Tartar’s horse trod, the grass never grew, but where Christ’s feet tread, life springs up in the midst of the arid wilderness. He cannot live without scattering life all around Him, even as the sun cannot exist without giving out his light on all sides. None but He can give life to men, but He can give it without measure.

To those furthest sunk in death, even to the corrupt in heart, who stink in the nostrils of their fellow men, He can give life. His voice can be heard in the innermost prison of spiritual death. As He called Lazarus, and made him live by His own supreme power, so can He quicken the corrupt sinner to sweetness and heavenliness of life. None have yet been met who were so far gone in corruption as to be beyond His quickening energy. None have ever trusted Him without receiving life, though their case seemed desperate. Yes, the feeblest trust in Him is life. They live that believe

“There is life in a look at the Crucified One.”

On all sides He dispenses that everlasting life which He compares to water springing up within a well. They that come under His benign influence live forever, because of their contact with Him, for this is life eternal, to know the Lord Jesus, as sent of God.

Beloved, the day will come when our Lord will prove His life-giving power on a grand scale by causing the resurrection of the dead. When He shall come in the glory of the Father, they that are in the grave shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. What an Exodus will it be! The slaves of death shall quit the Egypt of the sepulcher, and march forth from the house of bondage. Land and sea shall teem with the uncountable multitude, and He that called them forth shall be seen to be “the Prince of life.”

Who but He could have released this vast multitude from their long prison? The Roman Emperor Theodosius, in a fit of great good humor, set at liberty all persons in prison or in captivity, and then he sighed, and wished that he could release the dead from their graves. Theodosius could not reach the keys of the grave, these hang at the girdle of “the Prince of life.” He shall open the iron gate, and bid the myriads pour forth as bees from the hive. They sleep together in the dust, but when He calls they shall answer Him.

Hear this, O mourner, “Thy brother shall rise again!” Every man’s brother shall rise again, an exceeding great army shall be seen where now we mourn a valley of dry bones. Until that glorious morning, nothing pleases our Lord better than to be working spiritual resurrections. He says, “He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”

Do you know anything about being quickened from the death wherein you lay dead in trespasses and sins? Remember that marvelous sentence—“I am the resurrection and the life.” Your Lord Himself is the resurrection, do you know this? Those who have Him have life eternal. Have you proved this truth? God grant that we may have many examples of that fact in this house at this moment! May many of you look to Jesus, and begin the life which never ends!

Next, I think we may fitly style our Lord, “Prince of life,” because *He so wondrously sustains it*. If you have life, yet do you need food. You know where to find food for your body, the fields and the floods yield it to you, but where will you find food for your soul? There is but one place to which you can resort. Apart from Christ Jesus, not even heaven itself can yield it to you, though it drop with manna, “for your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.” Heaven itself can only give us the nutriment of spiritual life in that one form, namely, Christ Jesus. He says, “I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I

will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.” He says again, “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinks my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eats me, even he shall live by me.”

Brother, do you know this bread from heaven by handling and tasting it? If so, renew your acquaintance with it by receiving it anew. O soul, there is supreme virtue in this food which Jesus gives you! Are you faint this morning? Resort again to Him who first gave you life. Do you hunger? Come to Him who is that Word of God by whom men live. He shall satisfy your mouth with good things, and renew your youth like the eagle’s.

He does not bid you take life from Him, and then go elsewhere for bread wherewith to nourish it, no, He causes you to live by your constant and never-ending union with Him, even as the branch lives in the vine. Pray, “Lord, evermore give us this bread.” If you feed upon Him whom God has set forth to be the bread that never perishes, you also shall never perish, but live forever. Oh, for a banquet upon this heavenly bread this morning! “Eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.” Then, rising from the table well satisfied, you shall each one say, “Verily, he is the Prince of life, for we live by him.”

Brethren, this name may be illustrated yet further by the fact that *He rules life most lovingly*. “The Prince of life” is not a mere title. I suppose the Prince of Wales does not govern Wales, as a matter of fact, and other princes who derive their names from different places do not necessarily rule over those places, but merely wear a title which means little or nothing. Our Lord Jesus wears no empty title, He is really Prince and Lord wherever He is Quickener. There is no spiritual life in the world which does not yield obedience to Jesus. Other life may be rebellious, struggling against His sway, for “the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, saying, Let us break his bands asunder, and cast away his cords from us,” but the spiritually living, quickened by faith in Him, cry each one to Him, at the very first moment of their life, “Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?”

The spirit of life in Christ Jesus is the spirit of obedience. The life that Jesus gives does not go off at a tangent from Him, it remains circulating about Him as the planet around the sun. The life that Jesus gives is like the life of a body which is obedient to the head. My head says, “Lift your hand.” Up goes the hand. “Close the fingers,” they close. “Open the hand,” it opens at once, without so much as a wish to rebel. The rule is where the life is, namely, in the head. Such is Christ to all truly living men and women, their life, their rule is in Christ Jesus. Where Jesus lives He reigns.

I know there is in us another law working against the law of our mind, and sometimes bringing us into captivity to the law of sin and death, but this appertains not to our new born life, it is a relic of our death. Sin comes of that “body of this death” over which we groan so deeply, crying, “Who shall deliver me?”

As for the life which comes to us through our Lord Jesus, it is pure and heavenly. That which is born of God sins not, it follows after righteousness, and keeps the way of holiness, and must do so eternally. The Prince of life is a real ruler, and the life He has created is subservient to His sway. He is head over all things in His church as well as *to* His church. Ruling with a mysterious, omnipotent, and effective power, He works in the spiritual, so that they gladly pay their heart’s homage to Him.

I must give you observation the sixth, for I cannot else bring out all my thoughts on this marvelous name, “the Prince of life.” Our Lord is *He who is the crown and glory of our life*. The prince, as the representative of the country, stands for it in the place of dignity and honor. At great ceremonies a country is represented and honored by the presence of its crown prince. Among men it is but nominally that the prince is the glory of the nation, but in the divine life Christ is indeed the flower, and crown, and glory of the people who are in Him, even all the living in Zion.

If you want to see the spiritual life, you may see it in any one of the members of the mystical body, but not to perfection. There is life in the hand, there is life in the foot, there is life even in our uncomely parts, but if you want to see the life of a man, you naturally look in his face. If you would see eternal

life, behold it in the face of Jesus, for in Him dwells eternal life to the full. He is the embodied, incarnate life of God for men, and in Him is that life made perfect.

Beloved, the glory of our manhood, as it is spiritually renewed and quickened, is Christ! He it is that has raised our nature to the right hand of God. It is something to be a man, now that the Son of God is also man. It is much to be alive unto God, now that our life is hid with Christ in God. What a noble second Adam we have! How glorious He makes our nature! He is the flower of our manhood. All else is the branch, and leaf, and bud, but the supreme beauty, the image of God in man, finds full expression in the Firstborn from the dead, the altogether-lovely One. He is the glory of our life, and hence He is well called “the Prince of life.”

And seventhly, which must bring this discussion of the title to a close—it is *He who Himself is glorified by spiritual life*. Princes and kings reckon that the prosperity of their country reflects honor upon *them*. That monarch is great because he rules a great country, this king is famous because his armies have made him so. The people make the king. In our Lord’s case, His living ones are His joy and crown. From Him and through Him, and therefore *to* Him, are all things in the realm of spiritual life. All spiritual life glorifies the living Christ. There is not a beat of the spiritual heart, there is not a breath of the spiritual lung, but what means love and loyalty to the Christ of God. That we should repent, that we should believe, that we should do good works—all this is to make Jesus a glorious prince, glorified by such holy and heavenly life.

Your highest ambition, you quickened ones, is that you may crown Him Lord of all. If you had a wish and could now obtain your highest desire, your wish would be that He might be extolled, and be very high. I am sure it is so with you. You would forego at once ten thousand desires that lurk within your spirit, and that might, in themselves, be lawful enough, you would, I say, forego them all without regret, if *He* might have a glorious high throne, and be great unto the ends of the earth. I am sure it is so among the glorified in the New Jerusalem. In heaven they rejoice, but they joy before their Lord, in heaven they worship, but they worship the Lamb, in heaven they sing, but the song is, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.”

As in the aloe, all those long years of green leafage are tending to the production of one glorious flower in the end, as at last a flower stalk shoots upward like a tree, and then it is hung about with abundant flowering, so that the whole plant spends itself upon its blossoms, living only till they are displayed, so is it with the life of the saints of God. The aloe has no other reason for its growing than to bear that towering glory in the end, and so is it with the entire mass of spiritual life which God has made—it is growing and gathering up all its strength throughout these ages, that Christ may be glorified.

In the ages to come Christ is to be manifested to principalities and powers in the heavenlies, in and through His church. We who live spiritually, make up His body, and as all the body ministers to the head, so do we all strive to bring honor and dominion to our Lord Jesus. It pleases the Holy Ghost in us to reveal Christ and magnify His name. Are we not, all of us, if children of God, yet all of us so many younger sons increasing the honor of the “Firstborn among many brethren”?

All spiritual life is for Him who is our life. “He shall live, and daily shall he be praised,” we live alone for this. Bring forth your trophies to Him, you conquerors of sin! Pour out your treasures at His feet, you who are rich toward God! Crown Him King of kings, and Lord of lords. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! All spiritual life that was, and is, and ever shall be, is to the glory of Him who says, “I am he that liveth, and was dead, and am alive for evermore; and have the keys of hell and of death.”

It is clear that He is well named “the Prince of life.” I have been doing my work very badly because it is beyond me. My subject masters me. I am reminded of a story about Mr. Moody. Mr. Moody finished his sermon, and as he walked away dissatisfied with himself, he said to a good Scotchman with whom he was staying, “I cannot get to the end of it.” “Man,” said the other, “did you think you ever could?” Who can compass the infinite? I did not imagine that I could reach the height of this great argument, but still, I hoped to do better than this. The Lord forgive my feebleness, and yet use it to His glory.

I am not astonished at my failure, but I am weary of the ignorance which makes me fail. I wish I could glorify my Lord more. Help to make up for my deficiencies. Let this precious name lie like a sweet wafer on your tongue. Go to sleep tonight with it in your mouth, and may it flavor your very dreams, and may you wake up in the morning and find yourselves still with Him who is “the Prince of life”!

II. Now, secondly, I have to UNFOLD A ROLL OF WONDERS, which I see in my text, “Ye killed the Prince of life.”

See here, beloved, in the murder of Christ, *the height and infamy of human sin*. They chose a murderer, but they killed “the Prince of life.” He lived for their sakes, but they slew Him, He would die that men might live, but they killed Him. You blame the Jews, nay, rather blame yourselves. Those who did this deed were representatives of the whole race. We, also, put the Lord to death. Our hands were crimsoned in His blood.

*“’Twas you my sins, my cruel sins,
His chief tormentors were;
Each of my crimes became a nail,
And unbelief the spear.”*

Sin is Christicide. I have in my reading, in old books, found holy men speaking of sins as “accursed kill-Christ.” The name was well deserved. When sin was full-blown, it brought forth Christ-murder as its chief product. Hear how the wicked husbandmen cry, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.” He had nothing to do with our death, but to bear the penalty of it, and He came hither only to make us live, but we with wicked hands have crucified Him. What an evil and a bitter thing is sin! What a malicious and bloodthirsty monster! Oh, for grace to escape from it!

A sevenfold depth of cursing lies within the heart of man, for he would kill his God, his Savior. You, my hearer, will either be guilty of the death of Christ, or you will live by it. Which shall it be? You either kill *Him*, or you live by Him.

Another wonder is *our Lord’s condescension*. How could He stoop to die? To die by the hands of wicked men? Behold the condescension of Christ, that being the Prince of life He should deign to die. A look of His would have made His murderers melt away, as it shall one day make heaven and earth to flee from His face. One word from Him, and where would Caiaphas, and Annas, and Pilate, and the Roman soldiery have been? They would have become as the fat of rams, which speedily is consumed in smoke, had He but willed it, for by His will the old creation shall be dissolved.

When He hung on the cross the nails could not have kept Him there of themselves. He could have stepped from the tree among His adversaries, and made them scatter like sheep when a wolf leaps into the flock. He died, but that loud cry of, “It is finished”! proved that His strength was in Him, and that He died not of necessity. He could have lived, but for our sakes He submitted to death. How was it that there was a possibility for the Prince of life to die? I cannot enter into that mystery, but it was so. Though He was Lord of life, He could die, and He could yet continue to have such power that soon His Spirit would return to His body, which remained dead in the tomb, but could not see corruption.

As I unroll my text I see another wonder, and that is, *the folly of rebellion against Christ*. They killed the Prince of life! What was the effect of this vain malice? Could they really kill the Prince of life? Go and extinguish the sun, go stop the heart of this great earth, so that there shall be no more pulsings in her tides, but you can never in very deed destroy “Him who only has immortality.” Yet, they thought they had killed the Prince of life, and in a sense, they had done so.

And this is the idle dream of men to this day, they hope to quench the Gospel, to silence the doctrines of grace, to exterminate the ancient orthodoxy, and to put modern heresies in its place. Vanity of vanities! Even as the resurrection mocked the guards, the watch, the stone, so shall the revival of true godliness and the restoration of true doctrine baffle the devices of men. They that count the towers, to pull them down, and go about Zion in the hope of destroying her bulwarks, shall yet know that the virgin

daughter of Zion has shaken her head at them, and laughed them to scorn. As the Lord Jesus lives, “the Way, the Truth, and the Life” shall remain eternally the same. You fools, when will you be wise, and quit your vain rebellions?

The text also exhibits *the triumph of His life*. “The Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead.” His Godhead raised Him, His Father raised Him, His Spirit raised Him. He resumed His life, and thus was declared to be the Son of God with power. This glorious resurrection of Christ should cause the universe to sing. Rejoice, for Jesus has left the dead, no more to die.

A dead Christ? Then, there would have been a dead Gospel! What had we to preach to you if Jesus had not risen? Now that He has risen again we have justification to proclaim. Go, tell it all the world over, “The Lord hath risen indeed, the Lord hath risen indeed.” His resurrection is the cornerstone of the good news which the Lord has sent to believing men. Wherefore, with such a truth to publish, we faint not. This moved the apostles to preach with such boldness because they knew that He whom they preached lived again.

Notice here in the text *the assurance of that fact*—“Whereof we are witnesses.” There stood Peter and John, two evidently honest men, everything about them was straightforward, they had nothing to conceal, and nothing to gain by their testimony. They could have called upon all the twelve, and even upon above four hundred brethren, who at once had seen the risen Lord. The witness is perfect and unquestionable. Jesus assuredly overcame the pains of death, His soul was not left among the dead. His victory is proven.

“Oh,” say you, “those witnesses died nearly nineteen hundred years ago.” Yes, yes, but a testimony does not lose certainty by the lapse of years. If what they witnessed was true when they witnessed it, it is true now. They saw the Lord Jesus alive after His resurrection, and that settles the question. If hundreds of persons saw the Lord Jesus after He was risen, then He did certainly rise. Hallelujah! Here is a stone to build upon which the Goths and Vandals of modern doubt cannot tear from its place. The resurrection is as certain as any fact recorded in history. Jesus of Nazareth, though He was killed, did rise from the dead, and we rejoice therein.

Let us put the resurrection of Christ to its proper uses. Let us believe in Him as “able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.” Let us feel that our justification is certified by His resurrection, and our own resurrection is guaranteed by the selfsame fact. We are safe in the hands of His living wisdom, His living power, His living love. Above all, let us look for our Lord’s second coming, for He lives, and cannot forever stay away from His people. He that brought again from the dead that great Shepherd of the sheep by the blood of the everlasting covenant will also cause Him to appear as the chief Shepherd in the latter days. The heavens have received Him for a while, but He must come to gather in His people and cause them to reign with Him. “Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”

III. I have done when I have taken time to SUGGEST AN INQUIRY.

Let each hearer say, “What has the Prince of life to do with me?” Beloved, do you know the Lord Jesus Christ? Is He alive to you, and do you live by Him, or are you dead in sin? Which is it? A man must be either dead or alive. There is no space between death and life. You are either, dead in sin or alive unto righteousness, which are you? Everyone may tell, if he will make a searching inquiry into his own state.

A Brother said to me this morning, “When you preach I generally find I have enough to do to mind my own business.” May you all find it so! Mind your own business, and inquire, “Have I received divine life from Christ?” I will suppose the answer comes from one, “No, I am afraid I have not received it.” Well, then, do you wish for it? Is there in your heart a desire to possess this new life? “The Prince of life” is to be found if you seek Him. Scripture gives us this as one of the rules of the kingdom, “He that seeketh findeth.” But mind that you make a thorough and sincere search.

A farmer, by some means, lost a five-pound note in his barn. It was of great importance to him that he should find it, for it was the most of what he possessed. So he said to himself, “I am certain that I lost

this note in the barn, and as I must find it, I will turn over every straw in the barn rather than lose it. I will never leave off looking for it till I find it.” After some days’ search, as “for a needle in a bottle of hay,” he spied out his precious bank-note among the straw, and came home greatly rejoicing.

Sometime afterward, it pleased God to visit him with a deep sense of sin, and he said to his wife, “I wish I could believe in the Savior, but alas! I cannot find Him.” She wisely replied, “If you will look for Him as you looked for that bank-note in the barn, you will find Him.” “Well,” said he, “that is what I will do,” and by grace his seeking of Jesus led to finding, and he was saved, and knew it.

O brothers, turn over those trusses of memories of the Word which you heard long ago, and among them you may find the Savior. O sisters, stir up the dust of what you learned in Sunday school, and you shall come upon your Lord before long. It is written, “Ye shall seek me, and find me, when you shall search for me with all your heart.”

If Christ were dead and motionless, He would be hard to discover, but life cannot long be hidden. On the hillside yonder soldiers are waiting to come down upon our army, but our watchers cannot see them because the men lie quiet behind rocks and trees. The moment the soldiers begin to move we shall discern them, a living and moving object our glasses will soon detect.

O souls, the Lord Jesus is living and moving, and therefore He is visible to the naked eye of faith! Look *for* Him, and then look *to* Him. Because He is life He cannot be hid. Oh, that you may behold Him soon! “Oh,” says one, “I do long to find eternal life!” Then, seek it in the right way. Follow only one track, Jesus is the one and only way to life.

In the old times of slavery in the States, when men escaped from their masters, they did so by knowing that the north star would lead them to freedom, and by following that heavenly guide. They had to travel by night, for fear of being captured and taken back, and therefore they learned little of the geography of the country, they cared for nothing but the star. As they hastened through the woods, they did not study botany, as they flitted through towns and villages along the road, they learned nothing of politics or social reform, they knew one thing, and minded that one thing only, they kept on following the pole-star.

Brother, there are hosts of things that you do not know at present, and many things that you will never know, but see to it that you know Jesus, who is the pole-star of salvation. Keep Christ in your eye. Follow the crucified and risen One. Trust Him, rely upon Him, follow Him, receive the life of which He is the Prince, and it shall be well with your soul. May you live in Christ Jesus, and glorify Him as “the Prince of life” for ever and ever! Amen.

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Acts 3, 4:1-14

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—306, 430, 313

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